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California GARDEN

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EUCALYPTUS

JANUARY-
FEBRUARY
1937

The Garden in February
By Bertha M. Thomas

Begonia Notes
By Eva Kenworthy Grey

Dahlias in the Home Garden
By Frederick G. Jackson

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Conservation Week

March 7 to 14, 1937

Theodore Roosevelt Said:

"As a nation we not only enjoy a wonderful measure of present prosperity but if this prosperity is used aright it is an earnest of future success such as no other nation will have. The reward of foresight for this Nation is great and easily foretold. But there must be the look ahead, there must be a realization of the fact that to waste, to destroy, our natural resources, to skin and exhaust the land instead of using it so as to increase its usefulness, will result in undermining in the days of our children the very prosperity which we ought by right to hand down to them amplified and developed.

"Men and Nature must work hand in hand. The throwing out of balance of the resources of nature throws out of balance also the lives of men . . . "

Governor Merriam's Message

"It is of great import that we use and protect our natural resources—our beautiful forests and other native flora, our wild life, streams, lakes and seashore, in such a way as to preserve their value and beauty. We must prevent forest fires, soil erosion, and the depletion of water resources. Public opinion must be mobilized. It is fitting that the period beginning March 7, Luther Burbank's birthday, which is California's Conservation, Bird and Arbor Day, should be set aside as Conservation Week. I request all interested departments, organizations, agencies, groups and individuals, and particularly the schools of the State, to recognize and encourage the observance of Conservation Week." —Frank F. Merriam.

Poinsettia Festival

Plans for a campaign to stage San Diego's first annual Poinsettia festival next December were revealed during January by Joseph E. Dryer, founder and president of the Heaven on Earth Club, which will sponsor the event.

In joining the drive to make San Diego poinsettia-conscious, Mr. John Morley, city park superintendent, announced that his department would donate several thousand poinsettia cuttings to the citizens free of charge in late March or early April. These slips will be distributed from the nurseries in Balboa park.

It is Mr. Dryer's plan to enlist the citizens in a plan to plant the beautiful red Christmas flowers everywhere in the city. Mr. Morley has agreed to concentrate on the raising of poinsettias in Balboa park.

In discussing the proper way to cut this season's poinsettias with Mr. Dryer and Mr. George Otto, president of the park commission, Mr. Morley warned against cutting the stalks until the last week in March or the first week in April.

"No matter how droopy the poinsettia looks, do not cut them too soon," said Mr. Morley. "After you cut the stalks let them lie for a day or two so that the sap can dry. There should be five eyes to each cutting, two of which should be buried in the ground."

Mr. Morley also advised planting the cutting where "you want it to grow, because they will not stand transplanting." —San Diego Union

Garden Pictures

A GARDEN THAT SINGS

"Every little atom is attuned to a musical note" thinks the inspirer of my garden picture and I think so too. In the tenderly tinted radiance of a golden sunset I first glimpsed this garden which is hidden on the westward slope of a silver-green stretch of native land that finally blends into the blue Pacific. There a full-throated chorus of delicately flushed gladiolas standing beside their sisters in apricot-colored gowns greeted me with their heaven-sent arias. And then I discovered gay snapdragons of cream and red and deeper red creating jolly little scherzos while carnations and pinks sang up and down the scales of color. Delicately scented verbena sent innuendos of its own into the air and all about and around me lavendar and white statice trilled out charming grace notes like fairies of enchantment. Then breathlessly I became aware of a little yellow rose (William Allen Richardson) that threaded its way on a hidden fence as if holding all together with its single theme of love in a paean of praise to the golden sun and a hymn of thanksgiving to the tenderness of mother earth.

Julie Neville Shore.

Association Activities . . . .

By Ada Perry

It's embarrassing to have to write a story after Eileen Jackson of the San Diego Union has written it. Her story of the Christmas decoration exhibits by the garden club of the Junior League comprised two delightful columns in the San Diego Union December 16. The exhibit was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Bartlett, for the benefit of the Floral association. It was a glamorous success. Miss Jackson's story gave it everything it deserved in such a pleasing manner that this correspondent "won't play." She grumpily advises you to borrow the clipping from someone who's saved it (the correspondent's clipping, if you like) and re-read some gorgeous reporting. The list of winners is hereby appended from the Union to perpetuate the memory of the many splendid people who took an enthusiastic part in the project.

Trophy winners for large tables with appiontments were: Mrs. William Paxton Cary, first; Mrs. Robert Frazee and Mrs. Frederick Muhs, second; Mrs. James Forward, third; Mrs. W. Murray Smith, honorable mentino.

Prizes for centerpieces on card tables with one cover went to Mrs. Harold Torbert, first; Mrs. Griffing Bancroft, second; Mrs. Lawrence Barr, third, and Mrs. Charles Wincote, honorable mention.

For arrangements the following won awards: Miss Alice Greer, first; Mrs. Richmond Jackson, second; Mrs. Albert E. Scott, third; Mrs. Armistead Carter and Mrs. Mary Greer, fourth.

Prize winning wreaths were those made by Miss Mary Marston, first; Mrs. Sydney Dodds, second; Mrs. Gilbert Jones, third, and Miss Marion Robinson, honorable mention.

Mrs. Graham Robinson won first for packages; Mrs. Burnet Wohlford, second; Miss Corinne Connell and Mrs. Allan Klauber, honorable mention.

Mrs. Lawrence Barr won first prize for her creche; Mrs. L. J. Proper and Mrs. Wallace Johnson, second, and Virginia Keys, third.

In the large exhibits, miscellaneous group, the following won trophies; Mrs. Sam Moore, first; Mrs. Phillip Bartlett and Mrs. Emily Clayton, second; and Mrs. Herbert Evans, honorable mention.

At the December association meeting the same week, Miss Alice Rainford came in from a last look at the tempting decoration exhibits and reviewed them for members. Miss Rainford's understanding of the decoration art made her talk very interesting, of course. In addition members hold her in high regard, just as all who know her do. Her appearances are always highlights.

The second address of the evening was made by association treasurer, Frederick G. Jackson. Mr. Jackson presented floral observations made by him on a trip to Japan this fall. Theey were different observations, such as a scholar makes, and somehow one got a much better idea of Japan as a consequence. He told of the Tokio flower show which lasts six weeks in a five-story building. His description of a Japanese play presented at the flower show was the best this correspondent has ever heard, bar none.

He also described three landscaped Japanese gardens in Kioto, everything small but not looking small because of perfect proportion.

Mr. Jackson's entertaining travelogue over the association members took part in their December plant drawing, a very nice Santa Claus procedure and this correspondent thanks the person who donated the pretty crassula columbaria. And this is a good note to finish on.

On Sale—Complete files of the California Garden.

Frost Resistant Plants

Correa pulchella has made itself conspicuous during the severe cold spell. It is in full bloom and many buds appearing and its small dainty pale pink bells are all in perfect condition.

A similar report from W. B. Clarke of San Jose has been received. Small growing shrubs and winter bloomers are very desirable, so this will become a standard for all nurseries. The pretty pink flowering breath of Heaven, diosna looks well and full of bloom also. All the heathers that I have observed look well. Not a sign of any injury to be seen. The 500 South African Ericas or heathers are plants for Southern California to specialize upon. They flourish with a climate that has a decidedly dry and wet season, but the English heathers flourish with plenty of fog and continual moisture, so are a failure for Southern California.

Mr. E. O. Orpett of Santa Barbara writes that the South African plants withstood the cold there better than many other plants.

The choice prostrate growing grevillea obtusifolia also looks fine, not an imperfect leaf. This plant will soon be greatly in demand for sloping banks and wide parking spaces.

Lists of plants that recover rapidly from the severe cold and those that were killed and those that were not injured will be desirable plant lists to be consulted for the future.

Every gardener should make lists of their own plants, for the future benefit of friends and the cause of Horticulture. —K. O. Sessions.

SCALE ON CACTI

The customary instructions to wash scales from plants, like palms, of course, do not apply to spiny cactus plants. The solution recommended by E. E. Davis, in "Desert" consists of one-half pint denatured alcohol, one-half pint water and 10 drops of "Black Leaf 40" sprayed on with an atomizer. After applications of this mixture have been made a few days apart, use a forcible fine spray of clear water to wash off the dead scales.

The Garden in February . . . .

By Bertha M. Thomas

A water pool is a continual source of amusement and education and from many different angles. There are about 100 varieties of Water Lilies, each with peculiarities of its own in manner of growth, of bloom, etc.

The Aquatic plants other than lilies are nearly as many. The Fish Family comprises several dozen varieties which can safely be kept in your water garden over our so-called winter in San Diego.

The Water Snails comprise another dozen—all of a different color, shape, habit of life and propagation, and each one of intense interest if you stop and look long enough to see for yourself.

Then if you go far enough to get into the microscopic life in the water one will find continual amazement. That is the only word that expresses one's mind. Hundreds of varieties, some whose life cycle is only a few moments, others of hours, then of days, etc. Each of these the most beautiful in color—and changeful in form and manners of life.

The Algea comprises about 100 kinds I believe—so you may keep busy a long time on them. Some are very useful in the scheme of water life while some envelop plants and literally choke out their life. One of the prettiest of the Aquatics is the Parrot Feather or Myriophyllum Proserpinacoides, and it is also a curiosity. We ordinarily know it as with spreading branches floating on water surface and its finely divided green leaves making a pretty picture. But you will be surprised to look at growth of new shoots under the water—the leaves are much longer—much more divided and soft and silky, of a brownish color. The new growth is also a very beautiful pinkish appearance. In fact, one would never believe it the same plant as that on the surface of the water. It is of the most rapid growth of any Aquatic if given a tropical climate.

One of the favorites of our water gardens is the Water Hawthorne or Aponogetum. The one we commonly know is the white one, very glistening, which has white fragrant blooms floating on the water intermixed with the long green leaves. The blossoms consist of one stem with 2 spikes at opposite sides, the pure white bracts being all the more showy because of the numerous dark antlers clustered at base of each bract which consist of a double row along top of the stem.

The seed pod is correspondingly peculiar and as each vat-like seed ripens it disengages itself from the parent, floats and throws out roots weight it sinks and starts its new —then leaves—until of its own life in the muck at the bottom of the water. They like deep water, 2 to 3 feet, and are winter bloomers in our San Diego climate.

Now we have the Pink variety. It is not a pink bloom but the seed pods are and they are so beautiful we can forgive a pink bloom for being white. The seeds are much larger than the white, the leaves of a reddish bronze, and the whole plant of a very vigorous growth.

The Aponogetum family has 12 or more members, all inhabitants of Africa, Australia and Asia—and we are living in hopes that some day some venturesome traveler will bring us some more varieties.

If you have not already divided and replanted your water lilies—now is the accepted time. The earlier the roots get a start, the earlier you will have the white, pink, red and blue in all their shades and glory.

In the last Magazine we spoke of the unusual nice warm fall weather. Now we have had a near-winter spell but only for 3 days—and none like it since '22. We will soon entirely forget one little slip in 14 years.

It reminds us of one time we were listening to Judge Harden summing up evidence in a divorce suit. "Mrs. ——— you admit your husband has been drunk only once in 10 years. That is a perfect record."

Yes, Fuchsias, Begonias, Succulents were frosted—the typical Dombeya tree looks like a plucked chicken, etc., etc. But this is only in spots. Here is also a good argument for water pools—ours sat there serenely through it all with Water Hawthorne and Marsh Marigold in bloom, also some water lilies and neither blooms nor leaves of any ever knew there was a frost.

Poinsettias are more sensitive and almost everywhere are a wreck, but plants unharmed. In some cases blooms only 1 foot apart were "one taken, the other left" just the tiniest overhanging of any shelter or a chance for wind sweep made the difference.

Since San Diego is now waking up to the fact that in the Poinsettia we have something which is ours exclusively—did you ever study the big center of the blossom and notice those orange colored tiny cups on the side of each little green floret with its red tip. They are Nectar glands—found also in some other plants, but so very pronounced in this case that one notices and wonders. These florets are of 2 sexes. Saunders in Trees and Shrubs of California says "the numerous males (which consist of one stamen each) are bunched about the solitary female which consists of a single pistil, and which as though conscious of the impropriety of a lone female dwelling with such a multitude of the opposite sex, soon lifts itself by a lengthening footstalk to a place quite outside." The whole formation is interesting and worthy of a few moment's study.

And Poinsettias are so easily grown—cut off some of those long stalks and use them as stakes for any plant which needs support. In the fall you will have a gorgeous big blossom with no effort beyond the water and fertilizer you gave the other plant. Do not cut the stalks until ripe—probably about March—depending on the weather.

When Juniors Exhibit . . . .

By Ruth R. Nelson

The Juniors at Rancho Santa Fe believe that they may have recently started the only Garden Club in the world to spring from a case of whooping cough. It was during last summer, when this tedious disease swept through the children's ranks, that a Junior High School girl, Peggy Millar, seeking for some new method to while away the hours of her quarantine, rang up the writer of this article, with a request for help in starting a Junior Garden Club. Most of the children here have grown up with a Garden Club background, and think of the annual Flower Show at the Ranch as one of the fixtures in their lives. Hence this definite proposition was not surprising.

Meetings then were of course impossible, and schooldays together with a long bus ride, make an active Junior Garden Club impractical. The children were, however, recently given an opportunity to "show their wares" for us, and by means of a small but charming exhibit of flower arrangements, they gave sufficient proof that they have not been attending flower shows regularly, without gaining a full understanding of such affairs.

The exhibit was given at one of the regular meetings of the Rancho Santa Fe Garden Club. A simple schedule of six classes was devised form them; ribbon awards and a sweepstakes prize of Dorothy Biddle's book on Flower Arrangement were offered; a clerk and a judge appointed; flowers and containers provided for their selection; and the children of the grammar grades as well as a committee of Junior High School girls, took part in the competition.

Nearly sixty entries were received, including bouquets both large and small, and an especially interesting display of these in a class for boys only. There were lovely little miniatures (a class which the girls requested); and many other small bouquets especially staged to give their first exhibit distinctive value.

Never have ribbon awards been received with greater enthusiasm. Without undue publicity the exhibit drew an excellent attendance, and the work of the children received well deserved praise. Every arrangement showed thoughtful work, and close attention to their schedule and the points for judging. Now they feel ready to undertake something of this sort for the Senior Club whenever there is need for it. Committee in charge were Peggy Millar, Jan Stewart, Betsy and Dory Jo McCulloch.

Geralton Wax Flower . . . .

For the first time a San Diego florist has been able to secure the rare Geralton Wax flower for the late holiday trade, which was grown in San Diego.

Its fine keeping qualities—at least 10 to 14 days makes it an excellent cut flower—and as the winter is its blooming season it could become a good variety for the Eastern markets.

Another choice December and January bloomer is the Genista Monosperma — a fragrant white flower—with greyish thread-like foliage.

Its popular name is the "Bridal Veil genista"—which makes it desirable for wedding decorations in particular. It is grown commercially in Western Australia for the cut flower trade. S. California is growing some S. African heathers commercially for the Eastern winter trade—and one red terrestrial orchid and the brilliant Bird of Paradise flower.

San Diego needs to get busy in this interesting business.

K. O. Sessions.

Propose a State Tree

The great sequoias of California are better known throughout the world than any other natural feature of this state. It seems singular, therefore, that although we have adopted a State Flower, the California Poppy, and a State Bird, the Valley Quail, no official recognition has yet been given to our gigantic forest trees.

Among our native trees, no species is more deserving of such recognition than the Redwood (Sequoia sempervirens). It is the tallest known living thing on earth; its natural distribution is limited almost wholly to California; it has been a most important asset in the building of our state; it is being grown successfully in parks and gardens throughout most of California and in many parts of the world; it is the most distinctive, the most stately and the most beloved of all of our native trees.

A bill designating the Redwood as the State Tree of California, is to be introduced to the State Legislature by Senator James J. Hollister of Santa Barbara. The motive behind this plan is simply to direct attention to the unique characteristics and qualities of the Redwood, and to stimulate a greater interest in its beauty, its usefulness, and its value to California.

Mina Lobata

Seed planting of the annuals is at hand for February, excepting the Heavenly blue Morning Glory and its relative, the Mina lobata; they should not be planted until late in March or early April. Every garden should have a plant of this extra fine and beautiful Morning Glory which lasts until late fall. The Mina lobata make a slender vine with attractive yellow and red flower spikes 6 inches long and is useful for cutting. The humming birds are fond of it.

Give it a string or two to climb to the top of some tall shrub or the limb of a tree; several plants would be better than only one—for any garden. —K. O. S.

Begonia Club Notes . . .

Collected by Eva Kenworthy Grey

About 1875 in France, M. Schmidt produced three begonias from a cross between B. Incarnata and some tuberous variety. He named the red flowered hybrid Mme. Fanny Giron, the pink one Mme. Thibaut, and the white one, C. Schmidt. There is a colored plate of the three in Revue Horticole for 1875. I am glad so many of you saw the begonia article in the December number of The American Home, and I hope the rest of you will spend ten cents and buy it. Mr. Everett is an Englishman, trained at Kew Gardens, London, and I was especially interested in what he said about mite, "the most serious pest of begonias, a microscopical creature which causes the leaves to become puckered and brittle. Frequent dustings with powdered sulphur or spraying with nicotine insecticide at weekly intervals are controls." I have had trouble with B. Elaine. I find it delicate, evidently I do not treat it the right way. It is a beauty. Nor can I grow Rosie Murphrski, but Jinny May, (what a name!) grows beautifully. Last summer it was full of the little scarlet flowers. I think Sylvia, a seedling of Incarnata is not worth growing. The Elaine from Hawaii (too bad the names are alike) is not remarkable. One plant has made fine growth and has leaves seven and a half inches long and three inches wide. The others are small, yet all were raised at same time from the same seed, in the same place. How much plants resemble people! Haven't you seen a family with some sturdy children and some weaklings? Bailey lists only one Luxuriens, the one with the compound leaves. Evidently, the name is wrongly applied to any other begonia. Bailey may not be infallible, but he is the best we have, so we must stick to his nomenclature, and not encourage erroneous naming. Does Sachsen have really red flowers or are they only a deeper pink than Preusan? "Bess."

Begonia Imperalis

A strikingly handsome foliage plant found in the wilds of Brazil in 1859 by M. Ghiesbreight and brought to England in 1860. Coming from a tropical country it requires hot house treatment with a great deal of moisture. Is of low growth and thick rhizomatous stalk. The leaves are broad, ovate acute, and cordate at the base; about six inches in width. The upper surface of the leaf is covered with myriads of tiny conical protuberances, each ending in a small hair which reflects the light and produces a sparkling effect. The under surface too, is very pretty but instead of the protuberances there are tiny five cornered pits. The flowers are borne in cymes and like many ornamental leaved begonias are of small merit. Flower is white, dipeta-lous; the pods three winged.

The B. Imperalis, also known as B. Smaragdina also discovered by the same collector is the species proper and differs only from the type in leaf coloration which is a bright emerald green with raised protuberances like the type plants.

The variety of B. Imperalis var. Maculata, has brown leaves and green blotches. This variety is also said to be found in tropical Mexico.

Begonia Geogoensis

B. Goegoensis is another handsome leaved begonia from Goego, Sumatra. Thick creeping rootstalk, leaves borne on long green stems are cordate and peltate, dark green with light green along veins on upper side; underside mottled with red and green and slightly puckered. Flowers pink in loose cymes on long stems. Very dainty and lovely. Is fairly hardy growing under lath with glass cover, in fact does much better than when grown in glass house as it seems to like plenty of fresh air.

Golden Gate International Exposition

The half-million dollar landscaping program of the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition will be officially launched on the 90th birthday of John McLaren, creator of Golden Gate Park and advisor to the World's Fair horticultural bureau, it was announced today by Leland W. Cutler, president.

"The task of creating landscaping vistas, colorful gardens and tree groups on the sandy base of the world's largest man-made island and future World's Fair site requires the full cooperation of all Californians who wish to play a part in presenting a successful Exposition to the world."

"Stanford University has turned over 60 giant oaks, some over 30 feet in height, to the Exposition. The University of California has already pledged its aid in donating trees and shrubs. Berkeley, Palo Alto and other communities on the Peninsula and East Bay have offered their support. Evergreen trees and shrubs are especially needed, but all offers of material will be welcomed."

Work is now progressing at the Exposition nurseries in Balboa and Golden Gate parks in San Francisco, with thousands of plants being prepared for transplanting to Exposition Island. Procurement inspectors are prepared to follow up all donations offered in the Bay region. The widespread desire to play a role in creation of the gardens for the 1939 Golden Gate International Exposition has been gratifying to the horticultural commission, officials declared.

Donations of plants and trees may be offered to the following:

Mr. J. L. Girod, Bureau of Horticulture, Golden Gate International Exposition, 585 Bush street, San Francisco, telephone GArfield 6900; Mr. Howard Gilkey, 3147 Sheffield Avenue, Oakland, telephone Fruitvale 0644; and Henry R. Sander, Jr., 465 Lowell Avenue, Palo Alto, telephone Palo Alto 7224.

Question Box . . .

By R. R. McLean

QUESTION: When is the proper time to transplant oleander bushes and how far apart should they be planted? What is the best way to get rid of eucalyptus, pine and orange stumps?

E. S. B.

ANSWER: Oleanders should be transplanted when they are entirely dormant, as at the present time. After they begin to throw out new growth in the spring it is rather late to move them. As these plants are evergreens, a tight ball of earth should be taken with each. The tops will need to be cut back to balance the necessary loss of roots sustained in moving. If the oleanders are to be trained into trees, you will need to allow a distance of 10 or 12 feet between them. If as bushes, probably 6 or 8 feet apart will be sufficient.

The tree roots named, if not too large, can be readily taken out by a tractor or by the use of block and tackle, particularly when the ground is thoroughly saturated. If there should be any considerable number of trees to pull, the cost per tree would probably not be large. The writer has had large citrus trees pulled for 25 cents each. Of course, if you only have a few trees, the cost would be very much more.

If your eucalyptus and pine stumps are large, you would need to blast them out, if you wanted it done in a hurry. An old method of getting rid of stumps was to bore deep holes, say an inch or more in diameter, into them fill with salt peter. This was allowed to stand over winter and the following summer the stumps could be readily burned out, clear to and including the larger roots.

QUESTION: I bought some fine roses and want to plant them right. How deep should they be set in the ground? Are budded roses better than others and if so, why? Are the small bushes which are sold at a low price as good as the larger plants? Any information you can supply covering this subject will be much appreciated.

G. W. W.

ANSWER: There is some difference of opinion among rose growers as to how deep rose bushes should be planted. The writer is of the opinion that bushes planted in different soils demand somewhat different treatment. That is, they should be set deeper in light soil than in heavy. The usual recommendations are to set budded roses deep enough to cover the bud union and others that are not budded, that is, on their own roots, nearly to the first fork. This can be varied somewhat with the type of soil, as indicated above.

It is perhaps of more importance to prepare the ground well, digging the holes deep and wide enough to take the roots without crowding, trimming out broken roots and shortening others, and then firming the soil around the crowns. It should go without saying that good drainage should be assured. The tops will need cutting back and weak, ill-placed shoots should be removed.

Some varieties and classes of roses make a vigorous growth on their own roots. This seems to be true of most of the hybrid teas and many climbers. The weaker varieties are usually budded on some vigorous stock, of which there are several to choose from. Some roses therefore are better for budding and others are just as well or better if grown on their own roots. Many roses are budded as a matter of convenience and for the quick multiplication of new and rare sorts. Dependable nurseries can usually be relied upon to furnish the proper kind of stock for their plants.

The best roses are those having a good bud union and which have made a strong, vigorous growth. Two year plants are usually the best. The trouble with small plants is that they may be lacking in vigor or that they have been culled out for poor unions, weak and misshapen canes, or other inferiorities. The difference in price between a poor plant and a good two year old is so little that it does not pay to take a chance. The writer believes that it is economy to buy only the best plants even if one has to get along with a fewer number.

QUESTION: Do lath houses protect plants from frost? How far apart should the laths be spaced?

Mr. W. H. E.

ANSWER: Lath houses will give a certain amount of frost protection, it is true, but probably only to the extent of two or three degrees at the most. However, it very often happens that even this small degree of frost insurance is enough to bring plants

(Continued on Page 8)

LIVING PICTURES



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Dahlias in the Home Garden . . .

By Frederick G. Jackson

Dahlias have a distinct place in the home garden. They give a glorious splash of color through summer and autumn: white, pink, red, lavendar, purple, yellow, orange and tawny, in the brightest tints or the most intriguing pastels. They can be grown in all sizes of blooms from two inch buttons to monsters fifteen inches across. The plants can be selected and trained to any height from three to fifteen feet or more. Five to seven feet tall is the normal. Plants will bloom for four months of the year.

Of course they have their disadvantages, too. Gophers love their big tuberous roots. Sow-bugs and earwigs select their shade. Snails seem to have an uncanny eye for the finest blooms. Caterpillars, hoppers, and mildew attack them. But these pests are old enemies that we meet on every front. There are lethal weapons for them all. The two greatest drawbacks are: that the cut flowers do not keep long, and that the tubers must be in the ground from April to December so that it is difficult to use the space for other purposes.

In locating the dahlia bed it is well to remember that the plants themselves, even with the best of care, are not very ornamental. A distant view, if possible, over a low hedge, is preferable to a close-up presentation. You will want to walk all around your plants, so they should be three feet apart. A single row will look irregular, but two rows set staggered will give a solid effect. This calls for a bed five and a half feet wide. With a vine covered fence behind, a path in front and a low hedge to "hide their ankles," the other side of the path, you have the ideal location. Full sun and a loose soil are also required.

If your soil is clayey, spade in deep a lot of bean straw in the autumn, a bale for every 100 square feet. In April, spread on two or three inches of river sand and then spade the ground over at least a foot deep. Then you are ready

There are many thousand varieties of dahlias to select from. Each gardener must decide for himself what he wants and what he can afford. Often a friend can give you a few tubers for a start. Go to the Floral Association Dahlia Show in August and the other near-by shows. Study the entries and talk to growers. Select a few varieties that appeal to you and order them for spring delivery. Pretty soon you will be entering your own blooms and taking prizes, too.

Meloncholy Mood . . . .

O tragic cactus, in a brown stone pot,
Your lifted stems shrivel in impotence
Beneath the light onslaught of tinsel caught
Upon your pricking spines!
O grieving plant;
No more a symbol of the Christmas spirit
Than is a blade of grass or low grown shrub!
Your clime a glowing sun,
And golden sand,
A rocky eminence,
A wind swept waste,
Not this drear spot of winter shadowed shelf
And these torn shreds of glitter.
Yours the bare clean limbs,
And never should
Your harsh proud head be humbled
By such false
And passing pretence,
O desperate
And altogether sad
And tragic cactus!

—Murray Skinner

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New Garden Books . . . .

By Lester Rowntree

Along with the urge to arrange flowers according to set rules or to collect many kinds of herbs into one bed, gardeners have also developed in the last few years the impulse to grow more South African plants. Some of California's outstanding nurserymen and amateur gardeners are showing fine examples of this latest enthusiasm, which is probably for us the most important part of the three ambitions and since many parts of California are perfectly suited to South African plants, these will become a definite factor in California gardening. They are no fad nor fancy of the moment.

"South African Plants for American Gardens," by Sarah V. Coombs (N. Y., Stokes, $4.50) gives us some of the data for which California gardeners have long been impatient. So far, garden books have included very few South African plants, because most garden books are written by eastern authors. And the lately published bulb books have contained hardly any of the recent South African bulb introductions. Few of us had the chance to ask Kate Sanford all the questions we thought of when she was in California. This book satisfies a few hundred out of the thousands of inquiries which Miss Sanford in her hurried trip could neither hear nor answer. It straightens us out on the South African climate and gives cultural suggestions, which have come just in time to enlighten us on the treatment of the little plants which are coming up from Miss Sanford's seeds.

Thank goodness, Miss Coombs goes into bulbs quite thoroughly, devoting a third of the book to this all-important class. For the first time many of the Lachenalias, Moreas, Lapeyrousias, Nerines and other bulbs which have lately come to our gardens are described, with cultural directions for the amateur. She has our thanks for this, but if instructions could have accompanied each species instead of (or as well as) blanketing the whole genus, the book would be still more helpful—because some species of Nerines, for instance, behave very differently from their sisters.

I pounced eagerly on the Ericas and Pelargoniums, two popular genera which are very happy in California.

The succulents get almost as much attention as the bulbs.

The annuals come off not quite so well as the other groups, being scattered through the section "Herbaceous Plants" where the better known kinds are fairly easily located but the worth-while newcomers must be hunted for. Also it would be nice to know more about the Suteras and some of the other shrubby plants now obtainable.

But did you ever know a gardener who was entirely satisfied?

You will remember that several years ago, before the interest in the study of flower arrangment had reached its present pitch, Professor Edward A. White of Cornell University dropped into the eager hands of the people, both in and out of garden clubs, who were looking for guidance in the matter, his book on "The Principles of Flower Arrangement."

Since then several books about arranging flowers have been written and though many of them have borrowed from him much of their inspiration (as well as some of their phrases) none of them have been able to reach his standard of quality.

A new edition of "The Principles of Flower Arrangement" thoroughly revised and much of it rewritten has recently been brought out (N. Y., A. T. De La Mare Co. Inc. $3.00) and it is pretty safe to say that this is the authoritative book. Seldom do we find any volume covering its topics so thoroughly and well.

Professor White has been steeped in his subject for almost twenty years. He has been a thorough student of its theory and practice, liberal enough to be influenced by new lines of thought yet scientific enough to cling to the essential principles of composition. While he has given full acknowledgement to "Japanese Flower Arrangement and its Relation to American Flower Art" (a whole chapter is devoted to this) he realizes our need for originality.

Above all the book is helpful because it is so applicable. It describes many of the available plant materials and gives lists of them in various classifications, devotes three chapters to the factor of design in its various expressions, several to the different uses of floral decorations, one to methods of prolonging the keeping qualities of flowers and one to types of containers.

The format of the book is excellent. There are dozens of highly satisfactory illustrations and the colored plates are a joy. The color chart with its clear indication of primary, secondary, intermediate and complementary colors is something you will refer to for the answer to other questions as well as those of flower arrangement.

Professor White does not lay down a code of laws saying that you must arrange your flowers in such and such fashions. He tells you the reasons underlying the principles and discusses thoroughly their development from the original bases.

Question Box

(Continued from Page 6)

through night without being nipped. Nearly all of our infrequent cold snaps in and around San Diego are just on the border line, when raising the temperature two or three degrees will make all the difference in the world.

As to spaces between the laths in a lath house, the usual procedure is to make them equal to the width of the lath, although for some classes of plants spaces are left a little wider, say one and one-half times the width of a lath. This depends somewhat upon what plants you wish to propagate.

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